The Rationalist School of Thought and the Invalidity of its Proofs

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THE RATIONALIST SCHOOL OF THOUGHT AND THE INVALIDITY OF ITS PROOFS[1]

By Shaykh, Dr Muhammad bin Moosaa Aal-Nasr

Translated by AbdulHaq ibn Kofi ibn Kwesi Addae ibn Kwaku al-Ashanti

[1] A chapter from Dr Muhammad bin Moosaa Aal-Nasr, *Al-'Aql wa Manzilatuhu fi'l-Islaam* ('Ammaan: Daar ul-Athaariyyah, 2005), p.85-96

They attach themselves to the rational intellect as they judge everything according to the intellect even the unseen matters that do not usually agree with the rational intellect. They do not make the Divine Legislation as the judging criterion rather the intellect is the decisive factor over everything within the Divine Legislation and the religion. As a result, whatever agrees with their intellects they accept and whatever opposes their intellects they reject even if it is found within the Book of Allaah which does not have any *baatil* within it. Therefore, they utilise their intellects in order to attempt to refute the texts which, they claim, contradict the rational mind and intellect. In reality, the texts contradict their own corrupted intellects not the healthy and sound intellects, such as the intellects which are free from doubts and desires and thus do not oppose the authentic transmitted texts.

The 'lords' of this corrupt school of thought were influenced by the falsities of Western civilisation. Most of them are from those who took their knowledge from the West and studied at the hands of the Orientalists. Furthermore, they studied philosophy, *'Ilm ul-Kalaam*, philosophical rhetoric and became satisfied with the opinions of the people of innovation such as the *Mu'tazilah* and others. They became bedazzled by that and were thus tested by what had arrived in Western societies, such as technological development and advancement.

They began to strive for mutual understanding between Islaam and western heritage and culture, despite its contradictions and distance (from Islaam), like the distance between the east and the west. Thus, they call for the waiving of sound and firmly established principles and they also work in order to cut off from the Divinely Legislated texts or by denying or interpreting them with a false and corrupt interpretation. They have opened up a new shameful path for themselves to gather contradictions.

They therefore judge and ridicule many of the texts according to their whims, desires and corrupted stagnant useless opinions to the pleasure of their Orientalist and westernised teachers and whosoever is similar to them.[2] They do all of this out of ignorance

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[2] This is akin to the likes of academics such as:

1. The Swiss-born grandson of Hasan al-Banna (d. 1949 CE), Tariq Ramadaan who calls for "European Islam", "African Islam", "American Islam", etc. along with: a dismantling of Islamic schools in the West in favour of Western models of schooling; a rejection of the *hudood* punishments in Islaam; promoting feminism; free-mixing in *Masaajid*; unqualified interpretations of the Qur'aan; bending over backwards for the *Kuffaar* and a number of other *baatil* principles that Ramadaan has established to enable him to give *fataawaa*! However, despite his calls for watering down Islaam for different societies and cultures he has been banned from entering the US and France, so his *manhaj* has been thrown back in his face!

2. Taha Husain (1889 – 1973 CE) the famous Egyptian writer who was blind from youth and had memorised the whole Qur'aan. He later began to question Islaam and authored many books among them *al-Ayyaam* and *fee Sh'ir il-Jaahiliyyah* in which he criticised the authenticity of the Qur'aan and questioned other aspects of Islaam. In his other works he mocks the Prophets and questions their message, deeming them as only being sent for their people. Others Arab academics who have questioned Islaam include:

3. The Iraanian Ali Dashti, his book entitled *23 Years* is actually used by Christian evangelical missionaries who idiotically refer to him as being a "Islamic scholar" or a "Muslim scholar", in order to discredit the Qur'aan. Dashti embraced the *Deen* of Marxist-Socialism and thus inteprets Islaam accordingly, on page 8 of *23 Years* for example he compares the Prophet Muhammad *(sallallaahu*

alayhi wassallam) to Lenin?! He ridiculed the *hadeeth* literature for being biased and unreliable, yet when it suited him referred to *hadeeth* to support his claims! Dashti was entranced by the West which he deemed as superior and thus blindly followed the theories of Marxism and feebly attempted to apply them to the life of the Prophet Muhammad *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallaam)*. Furthermore, Dashti was a Persian speaker not an Arabic speaker and he definitely was not an expert in Arabic grammar, prose, morphology or syntax. Therefore, Dashti was not an authority to give a 'critique' from his own desires on the Arabic literary style of the Qur'aan. Dashti's case demonstrates that he was brought up as a *Shee'ee* and thus with a lack of knowledge himself about Islaam, as a result his writings give the sense of a confused individual. In fact most of those who become apostates from Islaam are either those who were raised with little Islamic education or knowledge or were raised within the heretical *Shee'ah* traditions!

4. Ahmad Amin,

5. Nasr Abu Zaid, who was declared an apostate by an Egyptian court in 1993 and thus his marriage was deemed as being invalid. Abu Zaid's deviation began after studying the works of the *Mu'tazilah* and then later the writings of the heretical non-Muslim mystic, Ibn 'Arabee. He was an assistant Professor of Arabic at *Cairo University* and his attacks on the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* were simplistically held up by *Kuffaar* as being a mere attack on his "modern education and rational thought". Abu Zayd employed a rationalist interpretation of the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* and thus denied many of the miracles mentioned, claiming that they had to be understood in their socio-cultural and historical contexts!? Him and his wife fled to Scandinavia.

6. Dr Khalid Abou Fadl, a professor at *Yale University* in the US who has questioned the character of the companion Aboo Hurayrah *(radi Allaahu anhu)* and has initiated other attacks upon the *Sunnah* and those who follow it.

7. Dr Muhammad Arkoun, of the *Sorbonne University* in France argues he is "battling orthodoxy from within", and thus an "intellectual and scientific analysis" of the Qur'aan is necessary! Arkoun not only apologetically explains many verses but also, like many of the names mentioned within this footnote, props himself up as being able to re-assess Islaam for Muslims living in the west!

8. Fatima Mernissi, who also throws doubts on the *Sunnah* and Aboo Hurayrah *(radi Allaahu 'anhu)* and calls for Western feminism.

9. Amina Wadud who has also degenerated in morals and *deen* and now claims women can lead men in *Salah*! Along with her cohorts they attempt to use the *kuffaar* methodology of publicity stunts in order to gain a following. This is akin to other extremist feminists who have emerged amongst the ranks of the Muslims claiming that they also now have the ability to interpret the Qur'aan and highlights "problems with Islaam".

Also the likes of what has been falsely known as "progressive Islam" in the West. All of these deviants relish in securing recognition and notoriety amongst western and Orientalist circles and even promote Orientalist 'critiques' on Islaam, demonstrating the insidious and underhanded methods that these so-called "progressive rational intellectuals" employ. They also represent an extremist fringe

and misguidance, to the extent that you will see that one from them will not know anything about the *deen* except its name, and will not know anything from the Qur'aan except its writing.

They neither rectify their outer selves nor their inner selves from deviation, doubts and misguidance. You will also see that they do not know the Divine Legislation of Allaah and do not adhere to the teachings of Allaah and do not view that *eemaan* is something that is firmly established in the heart without whatever is apparent with the limbs. This is the *madhdhab* of the *Murji'ah* of old and of the present; it is the *madhdhab* of the *Murji'ah* of the rationalists who understand the Divine Legislation far from the revelation of the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* and the path of the scholars from the Imaams and the firmly grounded scholars in every era and epoch.

So this is school of the rationalists that rejects many of the Divinely Legislated texts using as a proof the idea that the texts oppose the intellect and the 'current situation.' For example, some of the rationalists are not convinced that a fly has in its wings a disease on one and a cure on the other and so that if it is dipped into a vessel they see this as being disgusting. But if a doctor verifies and affirms this one day the rationalists would applaud him and believe him.

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understanding with Islaam which is no different to the extremists who call for terrorism, hijacking and suicide bombings, as they all deem themselves as competent authorities to interpret the Islamic texts according to their own futile whims and unqualified scholarship. [Translator's Note]

If a scholar from the *kuffaar* scholars comes and verifies that this is really the case, that a fly has a disease on one of its wings and a cure on the other, they would praise him and prostrate to him and say: "Yes now we believe in the *hadeeth* of Aboo Hurayrah *(radi allaahu anhu)* which is also found in one of the most authentic books after the Book of Allaah, that being Saheeh ul-Bukhaaree."

With this similitude they also do not enumerate many *ahadeeth* which they therefore attempt to refute through proposing the rational intellect as the ultimate definitive judge over the Divine Legislation of Allaah.

I have made clear some of the features of this rationalist school of thought which has become widespread today so that it will be possible for people to know such rationalists and be warned about the poisons that they have with them.

- **FROM THE MORE PROMINENT FEATURES OF THIS SCHOOL OF THOUGHT ARE:**

1. Their increased efforts in attempting to refute the Prophetic *Sunnah* in total or partly and therefore the *deen* with them is according to their desires and their minds. They do not understand that the *deen* agrees with what has come in the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)*, as they differentiate between the *Sunnah* and

the Qur'aan, as the Prophet *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)* said: *"Let me not find one of you reclining on a couch when one of my commands comes to him from one of my commands and prohibitions and say: "Rather I have the Book of Allaah so whatever permissible I find within it I deem it permissible and whatever prohibited thing I find within it I deem it unlawful." However, I have been given the Qur'aan and something similar along with it."*[3]

Thus, the *Sunnah* has rulings and in the legislation such as the Qur'aan. As Allaah has revealed the *Sunnah* in order to explain, detail and make clear the Qur'aan. How do we know our prayer? Allaah says,

"And establish the prayer and give Zakah and bow with those who bow"

{*al-Baqarah: 43*}

So if we wanted to pray according to this Qur'anic text only, would we know how many *raka'ats* to pray for *Salaat ul-'Asr*? How to pray *Salaat udh-Dhuhr*? How to purify ourselves? How to establish the prayer? It is not possible for us to know all of that except from the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)*. We heard when Allaah said,

[3] Verified by Shaafi'ee in *ar-Risaalah* (295) and Ahmad in *al-Musnad* (8/6) and Aboo Daawood in *as-Sunan* (no.4605); Tirmidhi made it *hasan* in *al-Jaamee'* (2665); Ibn Maajah in the introduction to his *Sunan* (no. 13) and al-Haakim authenticated it in *al-Mustadrak* (108, 109/1).

"And for Allaah it is on the people to make Hajj to the house to whoever is able to find a way"

{*Aali-Imraan: 97*}

But upon whom is it obligatory? How do we establish *Hajj*? We don't know!! We only know about that from the *Sunnah*.

We have heard Allaah command us to pay *Zakah*, but whom is *Zakah* obligatory upon? When should it be given? How? What is the minimum amount for *Zakah*? Do we know the payments of *Zakah* from the Book of Allaah? Yes, from the Book of Allaah!! The payments for *Zakah* are of eight types with other explanations, the intricacies of which are only known through the *Sunnah*.

Therefore, it is not possible to know everything about the religion from the Qur'aan alone, so there should be no separation between the Qur'aan and *Sunnah*. It is a must to take from the *Sunnah* and whoever rejects the *Sunnah* of the messenger of Allaah *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)*, the scholars are united on his disbelief and apostasy, and refuge in Allaah is sought. The *Sunnah* is not to be discredited with the Qur'aan and the Qur'aan is not to be discredited with the *Sunnah*,

"And We revealed to you the remembrance (i.e. the Qur'aan) in order to make clear to the people what was sent down to them"

{*an-Nahl (16): 44*}

And Allaah also says:

"And remember what was recited in your homes from the verses of Allaah and the wisdom"

{*al-Ahzaab (33): 34*}

The scholars have explained these verses as meaning the *Sunnah*.[4] As for the rationalists they expand in their own explanations of the Noble Qur'aan according to the rational minds and desires.

For example, Shaykh Muhammad Abduh *(raheemahullaah)* was an adherent of the rationalist school of thought and thus explained the verses regarding the *Jinn* as referring to germs and microbes. Whereas Allaah, *glory be to Him*, said about the *Jinn* and *Shayaateen*,

"Indeed, he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you do not see them"

{*al-A'raaf(7): 27*}

Allaah also said,

"And (mention, O Muhammad) when We directed to you a few of the Jinn, listening to the Qur'aan"

{*al-Ahqaaf (46): 29*}

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[4] Such as Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee *(raheemahullaah)*, see Abu Saifillah Abdul-Qadir, *The Sunnah as the Second Source of Shariah* at www.calltoislam.com

So can it be said that some germs came in front of the Prophet *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)* and listened to the Qur'aan?! When they heard the Qur'aan it affected them to the extent that the Prophet *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)* read *Soorat ur-Rahmaan* upon them and heard them say as he recited,

"So which of the favours of your Lord would you (humans and Jinn) deny?"

{*ar-Rahmaan (55):16*}

They (the *Jinn*) responded, *"We do not deny anything from Your favours our Lord and to You is all praise."*

Therefore did the Prophet *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)* see germs? Were germs known about in his time? Germs were only known of in the contemporary era after the invention of microscopes and lens that can enlarge small dots a thousand times its actual size, so that germs that cannot be viewed with the naked eye, can be seen.

Likewise there is the *Tafseer 'al-Jawharee Tantaawee'*, wherein the author explains the Qur'aan with a scientifical explanation according to his intellect and conjecture, yet all of it opposes the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of Allaah's messenger.

As a result it can be found that from among such extreme rationalists are those that explain the prayer and *Zakah* and fasting

upon other than what is apparent. Thus, they deny and explain away the Divine Legislation of Allaah and denied His *Deen*.

2. Also from the features of this of thought is that its leaders make the rational intellect as the foundation of understanding the texts and make the textual evidences subject to the rational intellect. Therefore, if a text comes and agrees with the rational mind they accept it and if a text arrives, meaning from the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah*, that opposes the rational mind they reject and discredit it.

3. Likewise they do not hold any importance to the correct *'aqeedah*, and rather view it as an opposing ideology and thus they do not call to becoming firmly grounded in the *'aqeedah* that the Prophets, *peace be upon them,* began with. As all of the Prophets came and said,

"O people worship Allaah, you have no deity other than Him"

{*al-Hood (11): 50*}

What is it with them that they oppose the Prophetic methodology!! This is the ruling that they establish upon their own selves.

- **THE MOST PROMINENT CHARACTERS OF THE CONTEMPORARY RATIONALIST SCHOOL OF THOUGHT**

1. Muhammad Abduh[5]
2. Muhammad 'Amaarah
3. Muhammad al-Ghazaalee as-Saqaa[6]
4. Yoosuf al-Qaradaawee[7]

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[5] 1849-1905 CE, he was among Jamaaludeen al-Afghaanee's famous students. Al-Aghaanee himself had extremist ideas and elevated the human mind and rational intellect to a level equal to that of Divine Revelation. Al-Afghaanee's methodology was also called into question due to his involvement with the Free-Masonic movement which at that time was establishing new branches within the Middle East. (See: Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, *The Evolution of Fiqh – Islamic Law and the Madh-habs* (Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House, 1996/1417AH), p.113). Furthermore, al-Afghaanee's deception was further exposed when it was discovered that he was not from Afghaanistaan, rather he was from Persia and of a *Shee'ah* background, not a *Sunni*. Muhammad Abduh therefore had a leaning towards extreme modernism due to the rationalist methodology that he had nurtured from al-Afghaanee. It is therefore inaccurate to say that these thinkers were "Salafi" rather they were rationalists and modernists, who found backing for some of their arguments from the works of classical scholars such as Ibn Taymeeyah *(raheemahullaah)*. Due to Muhammad Abduh's extreme modernist interpretations he denied and apologetically explained away all of the miracles attributed to the Prophets or directly performed by Allaah. Therefore, according to him the flocks of birds which dropped clay pebbles on the army of Ethiopian general Abrahah and his army of elephants during their attack on the *Ka'bah* were merely microbes which spread disease among them. Likewise, he gave a fatwa allowing Muslims to be involved in business transactions involving interest. One of the main students of Muhammad Abduh was Qaasim Ameen (d. 1908 CE) who was the first to make a vehement attack on polygamy, the simplicity of Islamic divorce and the use of the veil. [TN]

[6] Muhammad al-Ghazaalee of *al-Azhar University* was pro-*Shee'ah* and *Ikhwaanee.* Many of the sources that he used in his book on *Seerah* were not authentic as observed by Shaykh al-Albaanee *(raheemahullaah)* in his checking of al-Ghazaalee's work *Fiqh us-Seerah*. Ghazaalee was also refuted by Shaykh Rabee' ibn Haadee al-Madkhalee *(hafidhahullaah),* due to Ghazaalee's opposition to the people of Sunnah.

[7] He is known for a large body of false rulings that Muslim scholars have refuted, his book *al-Halaal wa'l-Haraam fi'l-Islaam*, has been rejected by many Muslim scholars as Qaradaawee attempts to sanction within it many things that authentic *hadeeth* do not condone. As a result, Qaradaawee allows

5. Fahmi Huwaydee (the writer)[8]
6. Hasan at-Turaabee as-Sudaanee[9]
7. The thinker Roger Garaudy[10]

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the unity of religious beliefs, music, dancing, suicide bombings and a whole number of evil actions that he foolishly attempts to justify under the false banner of "leniency". After being kicked out of Egypt he was given safe haven in Qatar wherein he has become the religious head of the country. The late scholar of Yemen, Shaykh Muqbil Ibn Haadee al-Waadi'ee *(raheemahullaah*) systematically refuted Qaradaawee on a number of occasions, saying once about al-Qaradaawee: **"From the callers to misguidance in our time is Yoosuf ibn Abdillaah al-Qaradaawee, the Muftee of Qatar…"** Furthermore, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Yahyaa an-Najmee *(hf)* of Jeezaan in the south of Saudi Arabia refuted Qaradaawee in the introduction to a book by Shaykh Ahmad bin Muhammad al-'Adeenee entitled *Raf'ul-Lithaam 'am Mukhaalafaat il-Qaradaawee li Sharee'at il-Islaam (Unveiling Qaradaawee's Opposition to the Divine Legislation of Islaam)*. Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdillaah al-Imaam *(hf)* said, **"I have reviewed the book of the noble brother Ahmad Mansoor al-'Adeenee, entitled *Raf ul-Lithaam*, and I found that the brother unveils and exposes the reality. The brother has mentioned some examples of the deviations of Al-Qaradaawee. And they are sufficient for the one who is searching for the truth and who desires to hold onto it, and whose goal it is to attain it. Since the scholars have launched their attack against Muhammad Al-Ghazaalee when he made his tremendous devious claims, then (I say) Al-Qaradaawee is his successor *(khaleefah)*. And he is the second Ghazaalee of our time."** Therefore, Qaradaawee is used by those weak individuals who attempt to justify under an Islamic garb any evil desire that they have. [TN]

[8] He is an Egyptian political analyst and editor of the Arabic newspaper *al-Ahraam*.

[9] The leader of a number of *Ikhwaanee* movements in Sudan and has been imprisoned on a number of occasion within Sudan. He has made statements concerning the Prophet Muhammad *(sallallaahu alayhi wassallam)* as being a simple man and also denies the *hadeeth* of the fly having a disease on one of its wings and a cure on the other. He was also refuted by the late scholar Shaykh Muhammad Ammaan Bin 'Alee al-Jaamee *(raheemahullaah)* in a lecture entitled *Rad 'ala Turaabee*. [TN]

[10] He was born in Marseilles in 1913 and joined the French army in 1939 but in 1940 he was detained in a Vichy concentration camp in Algeria until his release in 1943. He was elected to the *National Assembly* in 1945 and later served as Deputy Speaker and Senator. He delved heavily into political theory and the philosophy of civilisations which he taught as a university professor, along with the fact that he was one of France's leading Marxist theoreticians. After becoming attracted to Islaam, he became a Muslim in 1982 and still regurgitated concepts and ideas that were opposed to Islamic *'aqeedah* due to his heavy western educational background which he did not question, yet began to question Islaam. Furthermore, he did not seek Islamic knowledge and was ignorant of many of the basics of the Islamic *'aqeedah* as understood by the *Salaf*. He was also accused of holocaust denial in 1998 and taken to court in France over the issue, which he wasted his time with.[TN]

8. Jaabir al-'Alwaanee.[11]

And there is no ability or power except with Allaah….

[11] Taha Jaabir al-Alwaanee is the Iraaqee born head of the *Ikhwaanee IIIT*, the *'Fiqh Council of North America'* and is the head of the *'Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences.'* He gained a doctorate from *al-Azhar University* and is the author of *Reform of Muslim Intellectual Discourse, The Contemporary Islamic Cultural Undertaking, Ikhtilaaf fi'l-Islaam, Islamization of Knowledge, An Epistemological Perspective on the Political Dimensions to the Concept of Sovereignty* and many other books that are not beneficial to the general Muslims. Al-Alwaanee also recommends Nooh Keller's translation of *Reliance of the Traveller*, in which Keller feebly tries to promote visits to graves, *dua'a* to the dead in graves and *tawassul* through the status and persons of 'pious men'. [TN]